

approach is bad.

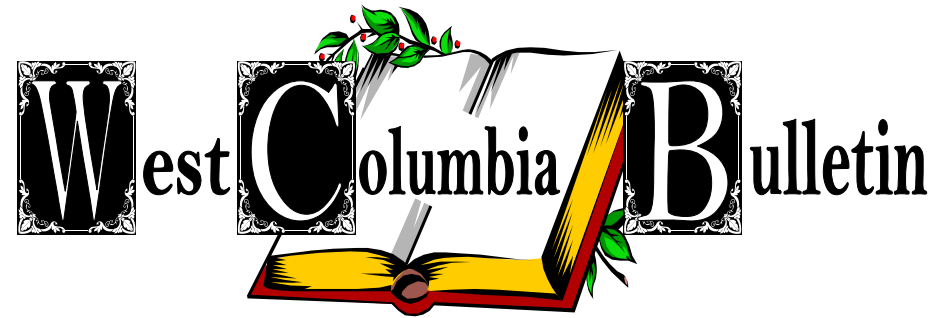
Also, whatever Daniel was describing in chapter nine ought to agree with everything he previously said in Daniel. In chapter two, we find that the Messiah would establish His kingdom in the days of the Roman empire (Daniel 2:44-45). In chapter seven, Daniel describes four beasts, and those great beasts are the four kingdoms previously described in chapter two (Daniel 7:17). During the last kingdom, the pompous, blasphemous kingdom (Rome), the Kingdom of God would be established forever (vs. 18-28). In chapter eight Daniel describes Alexander the Great's conquest of the world by showing Alexander to have been a rampaging goat who ran all over the world without touching the ground (Daniel 8:5).

All of these texts point toward the time of the Roman Empire as the pivotal moment in all of man's history. It was yet in the future of Daniel and the Babylonian empire, and it would come after the rise and fall of the Medes and Persians, and the Greeks. During the days of the Roman Empire, God would take away the sins of the world through the blood of His Son, and He would establish His kingdom and Covenant which would last forever.

I am content to understand these things in the simplest terms possible. Why must I see in ancient prophecy the very day and hour that all of these promises were fulfilled. That God promised salvation, and that He pointed across the centuries of time to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that we can pinpoint that final time as the one in which God "sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law to redeem those under the law" is more than enough for me.

Does it make me a numbskull or an intellectual lightweight that I just can't seem to stitch history together to the fine degree some want it stitched? Maybe, in their minds I am. I am okay with that. Think what you will. I believe that Jesus came when God sent him at the time God chose, to perform the salvation of mankind. That is where the seventy weeks of Daniel take me.

What does knowing the very day and hour add to my faith in the matter?



November 15, 2020

Daniel's 70 Weeks

David Weeks

The 9th chapter of Daniel is a hard one, and it is hard to find two people who agree what verses 24-27 is referring to regarding the seventy weeks prophecy. Many believe they can trace the weeks through historical centuries of historical events and end perfectly on Pentecost. I am not one of those people.

I am more than content to "ball park" this text and say unequivocally that it is pointing to Jesus the Messiah, His salvation of mankind, and His New Covenant established on Pentecost.

In the text Gabriel is interpreting a series of dreams that Daniel had. These dreams pointed toward the Messiah and His work of redemption. Gabriel said so: "*Seventy weeks are determined For your people and*

for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy." The "Most Holy" is certainly Jesus Christ, and the end of transgression and sin is what He came to supply. Moreover, He brought with Him and everlasting righteousness when He died and rose again.

And then, there is the fact that Daniel states that "*from the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;...*" (vs. 25). This nails down the final meaning as the coming of Christ for the redemption of mankind from sin.

Another piece of the puzzle states that tells us that "...Messiah

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shall be cut off, but not for Himself..." (vs. 26). This seems to obviously point to the fact that Jesus would make an end of sin and secure everlasting righteousness for mankind by His death (i.e. He would be cut off, but not for Himself).

Finally, Gabriel confirms that the Messiah shall "*confirm a covenant*" (vs. 27). Jeremiah foretold this New Covenant (see: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12). The New Covenant, we learn from Hebrews began with the death of the testator, Jesus Christ (Hebrew 9:16-17).

So, in summary, Daniel 9:24-27 is telling us that the Messiah was coming, He would remove sin from mankind by means of his death, and He would establish the New Covenant. All of that I am on board with. I can get behind this lesson, because it is confirmed elsewhere in the scripture.

Also, that Daniel said the prophecy would begin with "*the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem...*" (vs. 25), there is a definite beginning place - the time of Cyrus and his edict to release the Jews to return and build Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-6; Isaiah 44:26-45:1). There is also the ending place - the death of Jesus for the sins of the world, and the establishment of the New

Covenant on Pentecost.

These things seem to be indisputably clear from the actual text, and they are verified elsewhere in scripture.

However.

Here is where Bible scholars seem to lose the Bible trail of scripture to scour history looking for links to tie to Daniel's dreams. The internet is littered with complicated flow charts which attempt to show graphically how the seventy weeks, the seven weeks, and then the sixty-two weeks all work out perfectly to fit the number of years from Cyrus to the day of Pentecost.

Premillennialists, of course, make special hay of this text by creating intricate and complicated calculations and algorithms which combine history and events in dizzying ways that would make a NASA engineer's brain hemorrhage.

Brethren and sectarians alike who come up with their highly detailed explanations all assume that the "weeks" of this text are not "weeks" at all but are actually "years." However, unless I am missing something, Daniel said "weeks" not "years." What is it in the text that demands the figurative meaning rather than the literal meaning? As far as I can tell, it is the need some feel to be able to trace these prophecies through actual history.

I have read and heard all of the explanations given for the seventy weeks which Gabriel told to Daniel, and I have never been able to find one of them that satisfies me as the undeniable truth. They all seem to, at some point, grasp at explanations and assert: "that settles it." I'm never sure they are right.

The biggest problem I have with explaining this passage as they do is the fact that Daniel is clearly speaking figuratively. He is not talking about literal weeks (nor years) as millennialists say he is. What the various varieties of millennialists do is attempt to line up each verse with some historical event that occurs after Daniel's time. The internet is filled with complicated and colorful diagrams and flowcharts which desperately try to squeeze many hundreds of years into four verses in Daniel. The problem is, that the years these people play with fit about as well as square pegs in round holes.

I would suggest that the answer to Daniel's meaning is probably far simpler than people insist on making it. Why can't this merely be a description of the coming of the Messiah? Why can't it simply be a poetic way of telling us that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming to take away the sins of the world? Why must we be able to match every line of the

prophecy with a period in actual history. Why can't we simply look ahead and see with the prophet the fulfillment of the promise of man's salvation?

We are told in the New Testament that "*in the fullness of the time God sent forth His Son born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons*" (Galatians 4:4). In another place Paul said: "*that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him*" (Ephesians 1:10). This is exactly what Daniel 9:24-27 promises. That at some time in the future, of God's choosing, He would send His Son into the world to bring salvation to mankind. Why must we trace out every year from the promise to the fulfillment with complicated formulas and flowcharts when the Bible itself doesn't connect the dots? Why can't we just marvel as we always do at the accuracy of the prophets, in this case, Daniel.

The problem I see with sweating too much to align history and the Bible, when the connections are not obvious, is that we run the risk of either creating history or stretching the Bible to fit the world's history. Either